Condition of temples

†1222. SHRI BANWARI LAL KANCHHAL: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that most of the temples protected by Archaeological Department are in deplorable condition;

(b) whether Government would consider to make the protected temples revenue oriented and tourist centre after their renovation;

(c) whether Government proposes to seek help from private sector for renovation of these temples; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No, Sir. Centrally protected temples of national importance are in a fairly good state of preservation. They are conserved, preserved and maintained as per conservation norms subject to availability of resources.

(b) Entry to 116 centrally protected monuments, including temples that are not under worship, is ticketed. There is no proposal at present to levy any ticket or fee for entry to centrally protected temples under worship.

(c) and (d) The National Culture Fund set up by the Ministry of Culture *vide* notification dated November 28, 1996 provides an opportunity for individuals, NGO's and Corporate Houses to participate in the upkeep and maintenance of monuments. It is an important initiative for forging public private partnership and mobilizing extra budgetary resources for the conservation of monuments.

Funds for pilgrimage places in Himachal Pradesh

†1223. SHRI RAJNITI PRASAD: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to sanction funds for beautification of places of pilgrimage importance in terms of tourism in Himachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof, and the places of pilgrimage for which funds are proposed to be sanctioned;

(c) whether Government propose to sanction funds for beautification of the famous, ancient temple of Durga Mata Thar Jungla at Chadhgaon Tehsil, district, Shimla; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Development and promotion of tourism is undertaken primarily by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, extends financial assistance to the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for tourism related projects including places of pilgrimage importance which are identified in consultation and interaction with them under the scheme, 'Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits'.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Project proposals received from the State Governments/Union Territories that are complete in all respects are approved on the basis of inter-se priority and funds released subject to availability under respective head.

(b) During the year 2006-07, the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, sanctioned a Project of Rs. 780.00 lakh for Integrated Development of Pilgrim Circuit in Himachal Pradesh.

(c) No, Sir. The State Government has not submitted any project for beautification of the Durga Mata Thar Jungla at Chadhgaon Tehsil, district Shimla.

(d) Does not arise.

Promotion of tourism in Maharashtra

1224. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether faced with the challenges from other States like Kerala, Goa, Rajasthan, in promoting tourism, the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation has launched Mahabhraman, a public-private participation scheme to promote tourism in hinterlands of the State;

(b) if so, what is the total amount involved in this project;

(c) whether the Central Government has also agreed to provide financial assistance to implement the project; and

(d) by when this project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) The Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation Limited has launched Mahabhraman scheme to promote tourism through public-private partnership. However, no financial assistance has been sought from the Ministry of Tourism.

Development of places of worship

†1225. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) number of places of worship developed as tourists destination in last two years in States, as on date;

(b) the amount allocated during last two years, State-wise; and

(c) the places of worship to be developed as tourist destination during current year in the States, as on date?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Development of tourist places including places of worship is primarily under taken by the State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations. However, during the last two years (2005-06, 2006-07) the Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned 531 projects for development and promotion of tourism in the country including pilgrim sites. The State-wise details are enclosed as Statement.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.